

Contributed

A NEW YEAR REVERIE.

By Benjamin C. Moomaw.

Saw ye this writing in the book of time,
Or nailed this message from the vanished ages,
Or found the treasure in the Word sublime,
That love the sorrow of the world assuages?

Oh, tell me not the boreal winds, astir,
May bind the soul in pitiless congealing,
Or that the fierceness of the wintry year
Can freeze the tides of tenderness and feeling.

Blasts of the barren world may yet abide
But briefly o'er the valleys and the mountains;
And sorrow may but yet a moment hide
The springs of joy, and all its flowing fountains.

Avaunt, ye dark'ning storms; the youthful year
Shall soon in radiant bloom and blossoming
Fling far the phantom of the wintry fear
And fill us with the splendor of the spring.
Ben, Virginia.

A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER FOR CHRIST.

By Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler.

With the single exception of our Lord's intercession for his disciples on the night of his betrayal, the principal prayers recorded in the New Testament are very short as well as very simple. The shortest, the sweetest, and the most comprehensive is that one which closes the sacred canon; for the Bible begins with a narrative and ends with a prayer. It begins with the sublime story of the Creation; it concludes with a petition that the ascended Christ would come and take possession of the world which he had redeemed with his blood. "Even so—come, Lord Jesus!" If the beloved disciple had cast about him to find the words which should express the deepest loyalty to his Master and the deepest love to his fellow-men, he could find none so comprehensive as these: "Come, Lord Jesus!" They epitomize all the richest blessings that can fill a human heart, or save and purify a wicked world.

Into the controverted questions about our Lord's "second coming" we do not enter. It is enough for us that Jesus comes afresh in every utterance of Gospel truth, every manifestation of Gospel grace and every forth-putting of Gospel effort to regenerate humanity. All the preaching of the Cross, from apostolic days to the present hour, all the enterprises of Christian benevolence, all grand movements like the Reformation, the revivals under Wesley and Whitefield, the establishment of foreign missions, the emancipation of the slave, the temperance reform, the whole circle of Christian charities are only the continued advents of Christ Jesus into the world he loves. Only when Christ is in them do such enterprises possess power and permanence.

There is a great deal of rambling and of repetition in the average utterances of the family altar and the prayer meeting. But suppose that God gave to each of us the same privilege that he once gave to Solomon: "Ask

what I shall give unto thee." What would it be? One might urge the case of a sick child, or an unconverted husband, or a wandering son; and another might covet a blessing on his pulpit, or his Sabbath school work; and another might ask for a revival, and many others for victories over special personal temptation or the influx of some especial grace. But while various requests of various persons were presented, suppose that some one should rise up and say: "My petition includes and covers about all of yours. 'Let us pray for Christ!'" Would not his prayer cover the whole circle of cases and meet about every want? For, if we get Jesus, we shall get every spiritual gift. Health, light, pardon, strength, comfort for aching hearts, converting power, sanctifying grace, victories over the Devil—all these and more will come if Jesus only comes himself. In him dwells all fullness. What are all the miracles in the Bible compared with him who is the mightiest miracle the world ever saw?

Now, let us suppose once more that any of our Church prayer gatherings should agree to merge their various requests into this single one: "Come, Lord Jesus!" It might prove like the concentration of many sun rays into the focus of a burning lens. "If two of you shall agree as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven." Most assuredly a company of Christians could not go astray if with all sincerity they agreed in offering a prayer which is recorded in their Bible and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Assuredly no prayer could be more directly in the line of the divine promises; none more likely to be answered. It would be as nearly sifted of all selfish and sinful desires as anything human could be. It would not involve any straining after immediate miracles such as many believers in "faith cures" require. There is nothing impossible, or even improbable, in the fulfilment of this prayer of prayers.

For our Savior has distinctly promised his presence with his flock. When his bodily form floated upward from Olivet in the vernal air, and a cloud received him out of human sight the promise remained: "Lo, I am with you." Not somebody else, but "I," your risen Lord. Jesus was as truly in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost as he was on the day of his crucifixion. His presence filled that upper chamber, when the sound was like the sound of a mighty wind, and the light was like the light of a tongue of flame. He spake through Peter's lips, when the wonderful discourse made three thousand converts; and he wrought through Peter's hands, when the cripple leapt up and walked through the beautiful gate. He had a personal encounter with that bitter bigot on the highway to Damascus. To the bigot's question, "Who art thou, Lord?" the reply was, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." Christ was as veritably with Luther in the Erfurth Convent, and with Bunyan in his Bedford cell, and with David Brainerd in the Indian camp, as he was with the disciples on the shore of Gennesaret. He still does mighty works through his living witnesses. Every genuine conversion testifies to a present Christ. He still casts out evil spirits from the drunkard, still welcomes the penitent harlot, still whispers in the ear of the contrite sinner,